

GEORGE A. ROMERO

EMPIRE OF THE DEAD #1

MARVEL

**PARENTAL
ADVISORY!
NOT FOR KIDS!**

ACT TWO

ILLUSTRATED BY
DALIBORTALAJIC



NYC UNDEAD UPDATE!



MAYOR CHANDRAKE



PENNY JONES



PAUL BARNUM



XAVIER

FIVE YEARS AFTER THE DEAD FIRST WALKED, NEW YORK CITY HAS BECOME A FORTRESS OF ISOLATION AGAINST THE UNDEAD PLAGUE VIA THE MILITARISTIC FORCES OF MAYOR CHANDRAKE AND HIS CABAL OF SECRET VAMPIRES!

PENNY JONES, A MEDICAL SCIENTIST, AND ZOMBIE WRANGLER PAUL BARNUM ARE WORKING TO TAME A ZOMBIE (AND FORMER SWAT OFFICER) NAMED XAVIER WHO NOT ONLY EXHIBITS INTELLIGENCE BUT SHOWED COMPASSION, SAVING A STREET URCHIN NAMED JO.

HOWEVER, IT'S NOT ALL GOOD NEWS...THERE IS DIVISION IN THE VAMPIRE RANKS AS MAYOR CHANDRAKE'S OWN NEPHEW BILL MAKES MOVES AGAINST HIM...A WOMAN WAS ATTACKED BY A PAIR OF ROGUE VAMPIRES AND TAKEN TO PENNY'S HOSPITAL...AND A BAND OF SOUTHERN REBELS LED BY DIXIE PEACH PLAN TO OVERTAKE NYC.

NEW YORK REMAINS A DANGEROUS PLACE. BE PREPARED. STAY VIGILANT.
AIM FOR THE BRAIN.

BROUGHT TO YOU BY THE 
CITY COUNCIL FOR SECURITY:

GEORGE ROMERO WRITER **DALIBOR TALAJIC** ARTIST
RAIN BEREDO COLOR ARTIST **VC'S CORY PETIT** LETTERER
ALEXANDER LOZANO COVER **FRANCESCO FRANCAVILLA** VARIANT COVER
IRENE Y. LEE PRODUCTION **PETER GRUNWALD** PRODUCER
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UNDERNEATH THE AFENA.



JUST STOPPING
BY TO SEE WHAT
SORT OF PROGRESS
YOU'VE BEEN
MAKING.

NEW
RECRUITS.
EARLY
STAGES.

THIS ISN'T
PROGRESS. EVERYONE
KNOWS THESE CREATURES
ARE VIOLENT. ALL YOU'VE
DONE IS TRAIN THEM TO
USE WEAPONS! *BARBARIC*
WEAPONS, AT THAT.

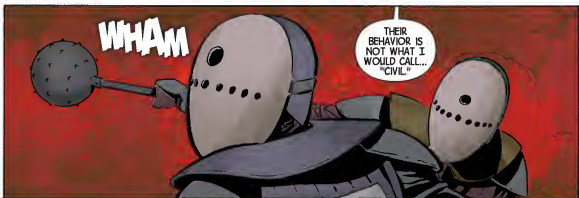
DR.
JONES
BELIEVES
THAT--

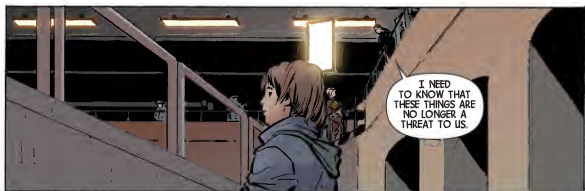
IT
KEEPS THEM
OCCUPIED...

XAVIER

...AND
IT TEACHES
THEM TO BE
DISCIPLINED.

WHO
ARE YOU?





I NEED
TO KNOW THAT
THESE THINGS ARE
NO LONGER A
THREAT TO US.

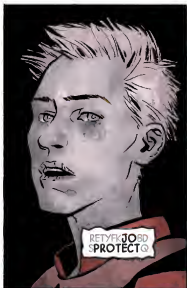


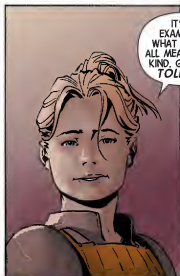
I NEED TO
KNOW THAT THESE
THINGS WILL STOP
WANTING TO EAT
WHOEVER IS ALIVE
IN THE CITY OF
NEW YORK!



JO,
WHAT ARE YOU
DOING?!

STOP
THAT GIRL!
SHE'LL BE
KILLED!





IT'S AN
EXAMPLE OF
WHAT WE WERE
ALL MEANT TO BE.
KIND. GENEROUS.
TOLERANT.



THAT'S THE
WAY I WANT YOU
TO BE WITH ME. KIND.
GENEROUS. AND MOST
OF ALL...TOLERANT.

THAT'S
ENOUGH.



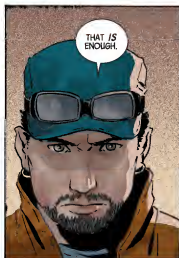
ENOUGH!

HEH...
LILITH SEEMS
TO THINK...



SHE SEEMS TO THINK
YOU'RE...ATTRACTED
TO ME.

SHE'S NOT
MISTAKEN.



THAT IS
ENOUGH.



LANGOON'S PUB.

I HAVE ONE
BAD EYE BUT MY
OTHER EYE CAN STILL
SEE! AND IT SEES A
CITY THAT HAS GONE
TO RUIN...UNDER
THIS PRESENT
ADMINISTRATION.

SO I'M ASKING
FOR YOUR VOTE
TO ELECT ME AS THE
MAYOR OF
NEW YORK.

JUST
MORE OF THE
SAME.

NOTHIN'S
GONNA
CHANGE.

NOTHIN' EVER
CHANGES. 'CEPT
FOR
YOU AND ME. WE
GET OLDER.



I'LL PUT
A STOP TO BIG
SPENDING, A STOP TO
BIG ENTITLEMENTS,
A STOP TO BIG CITY
GOVERNMENT!

GOOD.
THAT IS A
GOOD THING
TO SAY.

I MIGHT
BE RELATED TO
RONALD CHANDRAKE, BUT
I AM NO...**RONALD
CHANDRAKE!!!**



BOSS, IS IT NOT **DANGEROUS**
FOR BILL TO BE SAYING
THINGS LIKE THAT?

YES, IT IS.
COMPLETELY
AND CERTAINLY AND
WONDERFULLY
DANGEROUS.

PERHAPS HIS
UNCLE WILL
WANT TO MAKE
HIM...BE QUIET.

THAT IS
CORRECT, BIG
LOUIE...



I'M
COUNTING
ON IT...

UNDER THE ARENA



HEY! I
LOST MY KEY.
MIGHTA GOT
STOLE.

NOT LIKELY.
WHO'D WANNA
GET INTO THIS
LOONY BIN?



HUH?



DKKEYUOH



AWESOME!

YOU CAN GET
OUTTA HERE
WHENEVER YOU
WANT!

CLK



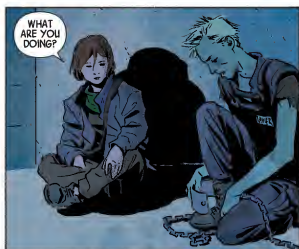
DOES THAT
KEY UNLOCK ALL
THE CHAINS. OR
JUST YOURS?

EPALLPBD

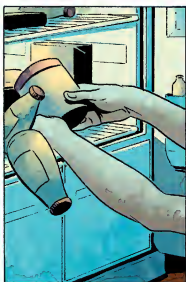
ALL THE
LOCKS...ON ALL
THE CHAINS.

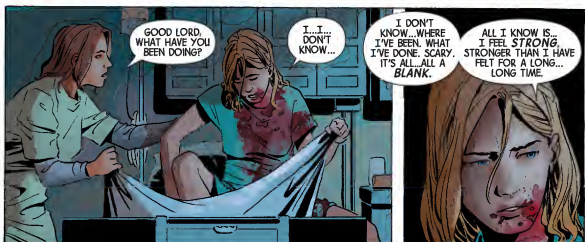
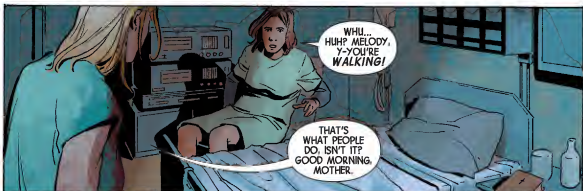


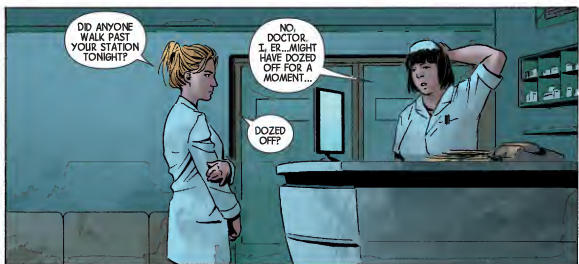
AND
YOU COULD
LET ALL YER
BUDDIES LOOSE.
IF YOU
WANTED
TO.



COLUMBIA HOSPITAL.







CHANDRAKE'S APARTMENT.



ON OUR
SIDE OF THE
TUNNEL, TWO
BORDER GUARDS
WERE SHOT
AND KILLED.

NOW, ON
THE JERSEY
SIDE, A TOLL
BOOTH HAS BEEN
DESTROYED.



DESTROYED?



VAPORIZED.



TERRORISTS.
SHOULD I BE
WORRIED?

IT'S MY
JOB TO DO
THE WORRYING.
I JUST FELT
THAT YOU
SHOULD BE
INFORMED.



THANK YOU.
WOULD YOU
LIKE A DRINK?



I APPRECIATE
THE OFFER, SIR.
BUT NO. IT MIGHT
REDUCE MY ABILITY...
TO WORRY.

NEWARK,
NEW JERSEY.

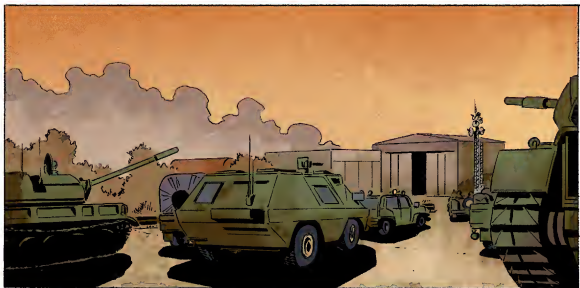


IT'S GETTIN'
TO BE MORNIN'.
WE BEST TUCK IN
SOMEWHERE.

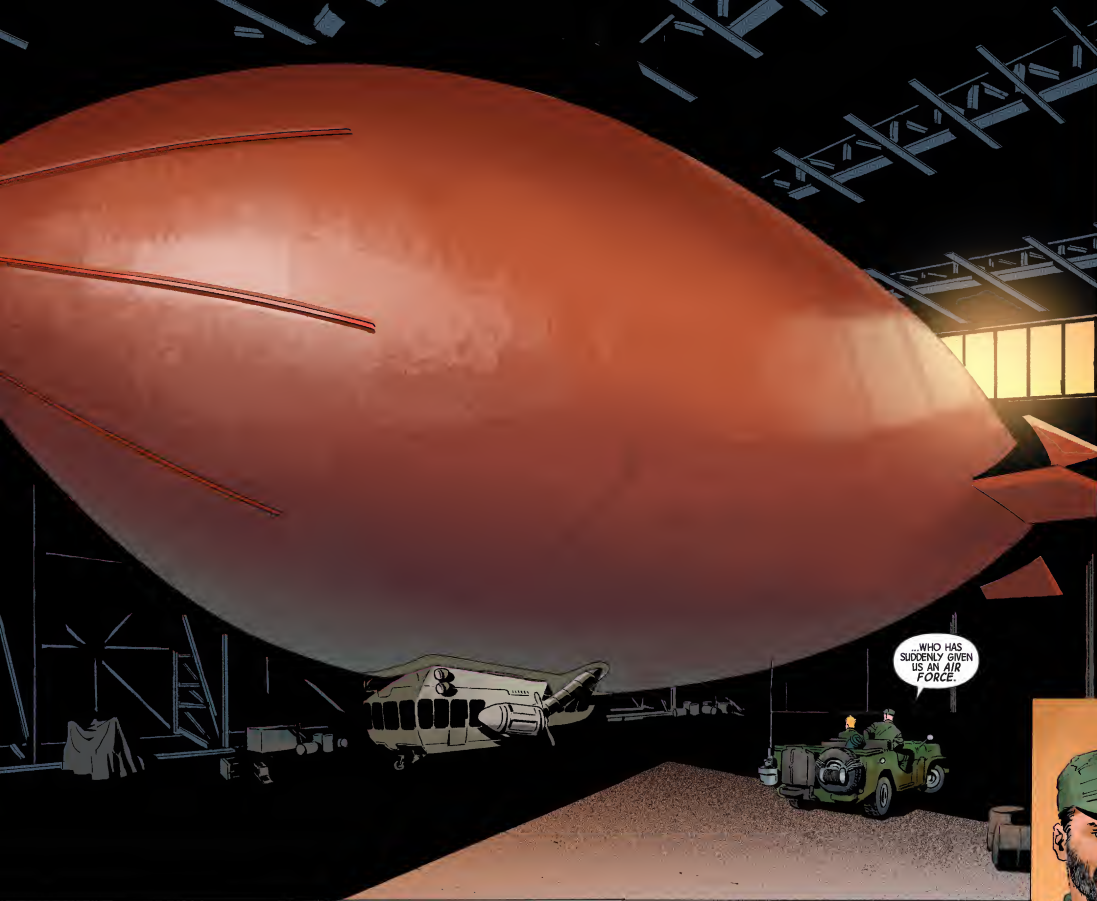


HOW DOES
ALL THESE
VEHICLES JUST...
TUCK IN?

THIS IS A
WAREHOUSE
DISTRICT. WE'LL
FIND US A
WAREHOUSE.



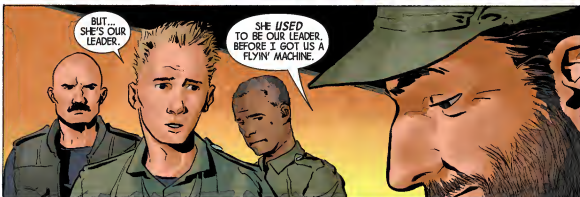
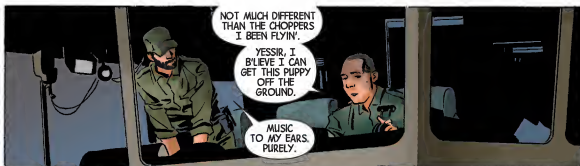
PRAISE THE
LORD...



...WHO HAS
SUDDENLY GIVEN
US AN AIR
FORCE.



FIND
ME TOMMY
DELBERT.



UPTOWN.

NEVER HAD A
POLICE ESCORT
BEFORE.









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BUT IT'S NOT ALL GOOD NEWS. THERE IS DISSENSION IN THE RANKS AS MAYOR CHANDRAKE'S OWN NEPHEW BILL MAKES MOVES AGAINST HIM, WHILE A BAND OF SOUTHERN REBELS PLAN TO LEAVE THEIR LEADER, DIXIE PEACH, IN THE LURCH AND INVADE NYC EARLY IN A NEWLY DISCOVERED BLIMP! MEANWHILE, TWO WOMEN WERE VICTIMS OF UNSANCTIONED VAMPIRE ATTACKS, ONE IN A BROTHEL, THE OTHER TAKEN TO PENNY'S HOSPITAL, WHERE SHE BEGAN TO EXPERIENCE A STRANGE HUNGER...

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COLUMBIA HOSPITAL.

DR. JONES,
DOES SHE HAVE
TO BE STRAPPED
IN THIS WAY?

CAN'T TAKE A
CHANCE ON MELODY
GOING FOR A SLEEP-
WALK AGAIN,
MRS. COOPER.

I DON'T
UNDERSTAND. HER
FEVER IS LOWER THAN
WHEN SHE WAS FIRST
ADMITTED. SED-RATE, ALSO
LOWER. CULTURES...BLOOD,
STOOL, URINE...ALL
NEGATIVE. SHE SHOULD
BE IMPROVING!
BUT...

BUT
WHAT?

SHE'S
HEMOLYZING.

WHAT
DOES THAT
MEAN?

HER BLOOD
COUNT IS IMPOSSIBLY
LOW. HER RED BLOOD
CELLS SEEM TO BE...
DESTROYING ONE
ANOTHER.

WHAT
COULD BE
CAUSING
THAT?

NOTHING
IN THE
TEXTBOOKS.

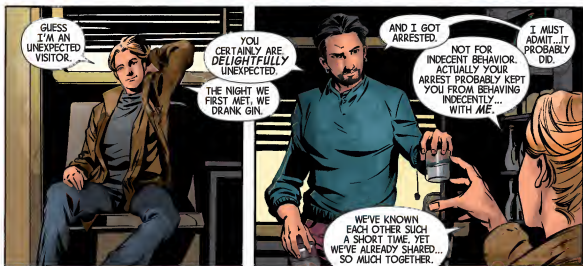
NOT IN...
COMMONLY
USED TEXTBOOKS,
ANYWAY.



BARNUM'S
OFFICE
TRAILER.

I NEED
SOMETHING TO
RELAX ME, PAUL.
CAN WE GO TO A
GIN JOINT
SOMEWHERE?

WE CAN STAY
RIGHT HERE IF
YOU LIKE. I KEEP A
SUPPLY OF GIN FOR...
UNEXPECTED
VISITORS.



GUESS
I'M AN
UNEXPECTED
VISITOR.

YOU
CERTAINLY ARE.
DELIGHTFULLY
UNEXPECTED.

THE NIGHT WE
FIRST MET, WE
DRANK GIN.

AND I GOT
ARRESTED.

NOT FOR
INDECENT BEHAVIOR.
ACTUALLY YOUR
ARREST PROBABLY KEPT
YOU FROM BEHAVING
INDECENTLY...
WITH ME.

I MUST
ADMIT...IT
PROBABLY DID.

WE'VE KNOWN
EACH OTHER SUCH
A SHORT TIME, YET
WE'VE ALREADY SHARED...
SO MUCH TOGETHER.



AND THERE'S
MUCH MORE TO
COME...I HOPE.

I'VE LEARNED
NEVER TO THINK
ABOUT THE FUTURE.
I'M STRICTLY A...
ONE-DAY-AT-A-
TIME KINDA GAL.



WHAT'S SO
TROUBLING ABOUT
THIS DAY...THAT MAKES
YOU COME HERE
LOOKING FOR A
DRINK?

I'M FEELING...
INADEQUATE.



REMEMBER I TOLD YOU ABOUT THE YOUNG WOMAN SOME STUDENTS BROUGHT IN OFF THE STREET?

THE ONE WITH ALL THE STAB WOUNDS?

SHE OUGHT TO BE HEALING FROM THOSE WOUNDS. BUT SHE'S NOT! THERE'S SOMETHING WRONG WITH HER BLOOD. AND I CAN'T DECIPHER IT.



HER... BLOOD?

HEMOGLOBIN CELLS THAT BRING OXYGEN INTO THE BLOOD-STREAM AND MAKE IT LOOK RED. THIS WOMAN'S BLOOD LOOKS LIKE *WATER*! HER RED CELLS HAVEN'T BEEN FUNCTIONING FOR DAYS!



WITHOUT OXYGEN IN THE BLOOD, ANY NORMAL HUMAN BEING WOULD EXPIRE. THIS WOMAN OUGHT TO BE DEAD! BUT HER VITAL SIGNS ARE NORMAL!

IT'S AS IF, I DUNNO, AS IF SHE'S TURNING INTO A...*VAMPIRE*, OR SOMETHING. BUT, OF COURSE...THAT'S IMPOSSIBLE.

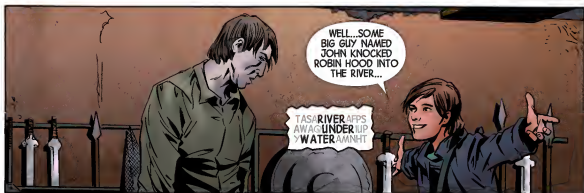


YES, IMPOSSIBLE. THERE ARE...NO SUCH THINGS...AS VAMPIRES.

BENEATH THE ARENA.



DID YOU
EVER READ "ROBIN
HOOD"? I MEAN,
BACK WHEN YOU
COULD READ.



WELL...SOME
BIG GUY NAMED
JOHN KNOCKED
ROBIN HOOD INTO
THE RIVER...

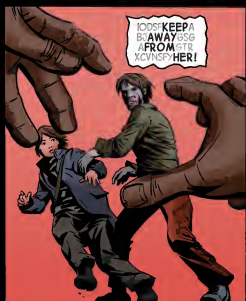
TASA RIVER APPS
AWAY UNDER TIP
WATER AMNHT



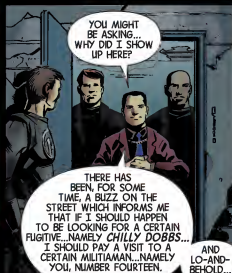
THE WATER
WAS SHALLOW.
ROBIN HOOD CAME
UP LAUGHIN'. JOHN
BECAME ONE OF
ROBIN'S "MERRY MEN."
AND FROM THEN ON,
BECAUSE JOHN WAS
SO *BIG*, ROBIN
CALLED HIM
LITTLE.

SIR KNIGHT,
I DUB THEE...
LITTLE
JOHN.





ISHMAEL'S APARTMENT.





NO ONE HAS
ANSWERED MY
QUESTION. I WILL
POLITELY ANSWER
YOURS.



THIS...IS WHO I
AM. YOU DO NOT, AT
THIS POINT IN TIME, NEED
TO KNOW ANYTHING
MORE.

ALLOW ME TO
ASK YOU ONCE AGAIN...
ONCE AGAIN... MEANING
THIS IS YOUR LAST CHANCE
TO ANSWER. **WHO THE
HELL ARE YOU?**



S'LONG AS
YOU GOT THEM
CANNONS POINTED
AT ME, Y'AIN'T
GONNA B' LIEVE
ANYTHING I
TELL YA, SO...GO
HEAD AND
SHOOT.

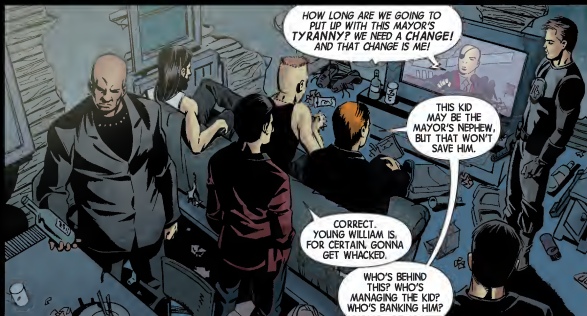


THEY'RE WITH
ME. I HAVE REASON
TO TRUST THEM.

WHAT DO
YOU WANT,
RUNYON? WHY
ARE YOU
HERE?



I AM HERE
TO IMPROVE
YOUR LIVING
CONDITIONS. IS
THERE, SOMEPLACE
IN THIS DUMP, A
TELEVISION
SET?







I'M TELLIN' YA, ZEB, THIS COULD BE THE BIG CASINO.

AWRIGHT, DIXIE. I'LL WAIT. YOU JUST GIMME THE WORD WHEN TO MAKE MY MOVE.

I'LL NEED YA TO BE READY.

DARLIN'... I WAS BORN READY.



CHICKAPEE, DRIVE ME OVER TO THE OTHER SIDE OF THIS GARAGE.



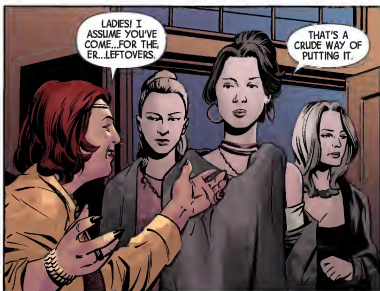
I WAS NOT BORN TO SIT AROUND AND WAIT!

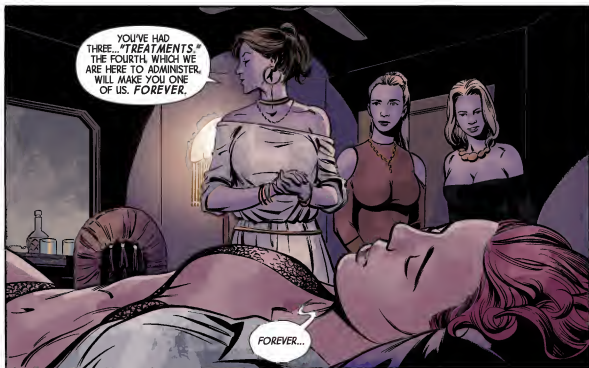


MOLOTOV COCKTAILS. EXTRA LARGE.

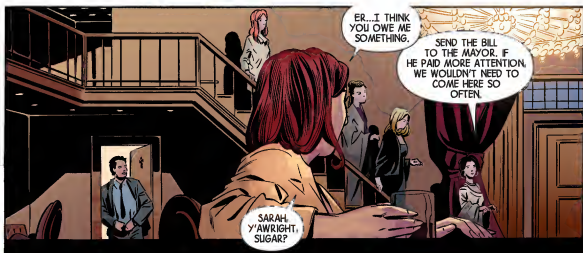
SWEET, WE'LL TEST 'EM OUT TONIGHT.

**BUTTERCUP'S
BROTHEL.**









ER...I THINK
YOU OWE ME
SOMETHING.

SEND THE BILL
TO THE MAYOR. IF
HE PAID MORE ATTENTION,
WE WOULDN'T NEED TO
COME HERE SO
OFTEN.

SARAH,
Y'AWRIGHT,
SUGAR?



NEVER BETTER.
I FEEL LIKE I'VE
BEEN GIVEN...A
WHOLE NEW
LIFE!



SARAH! WHERE
YOU BEEN? I BEEN
LOOKIN' FOR YA.

BUY ME A DRINK.

SURE.
WHAT'LL YA
HAVE?

HOW
'BOUT A...
BLOODY
MARY?



Y'AIN'T CHANGED, HAVE YA? I MEAN...
I HOPE YOU STILL REMEMBER WHAT
YER POSITION IS HERE IN MY
ESTABLISHMENT.

OH, YES.
I'M 'SPECTED
TA PLEASE THE
GENTS. GET 'EM
TO BUY YOUR
LIKKER.

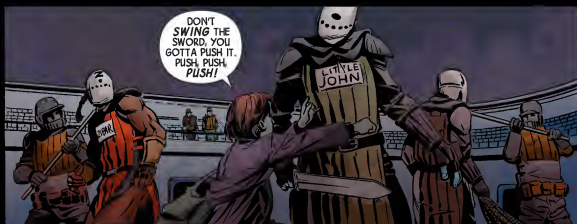


LET'S GO
UP TO MY
ROOM.



THEY
NORMALLY
DON'T RECOVER
THIS QUICK.

THE ARENA.







ZANZIBAR,
HE WAS OUR
HEADLINER,
BOSS.

PENNY
PREDICTED
THIS.



PRINT UP
SOME NEW
T-SHIRTS, SLIPSHOD,
WITH THE NAME
"LITTLE JOHN."



I LOVE
YOU, LITTLE
JOHN.

BUT, ABOVE
ALL, THE ONE
I LOVE MOST...
IS THIS ONE.



XAVIER,
YOU'RE THE ONE
WHO GAVE ME...ALL
THAT I HAVE. I
NEVER HAD A
FAMILY.

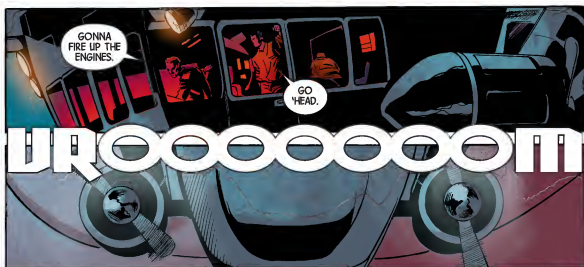
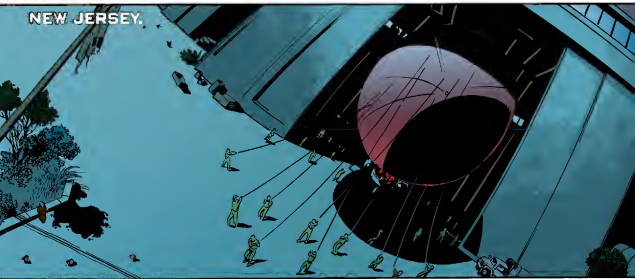


YOU GUYS...
ARE MY FAMILY
NOW.



I WISH
I HAD A
FAMILY.

NEW JERSEY.





Y'ALL READY
TO SERVE UP A FEW
COCKTAILS?

JEST WAITIN'
FER Y'ALL TA
GIMME THE
WORD, SIR.



I'M FLYIN'
BLIND HERE. NO
LIGHTS ON THE GROUND.
I'M RELYIN' ON
INSTRUMENTS.

WHAT'S THEM
INSTRUMENTS
TELLIN' YA?

THEY'S TELLIN'
ME THAT WE'RE
PURTY NEAR...



CORRECTION.
WE ARE NOT
PURTY NEAR. WE
ARE DI-RECTLY
OVER THE
TARGET.



SECAUCUS?

SEEE-CAUCUS.
YESSIR.





FOLIE

MARVEL

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BUT IT'S NOT ALL GOOD NEWS. A MAN NAMED RUNYON PLAYS POLITICAL GAMES, PITTING MAYOR CHANDRAKE'S OWN NEPHEW BILL AGAINST HIM WHILE QUIETLY BACKING DARK HORSE CANDIDATE (AND VAMPIRE) CHILLY DOBBS. A BAND OF SOUTHERN REBELS PLAN TO INVADE NYC, HAVING PERFORMED A TEST ATTACK ON SECAUCUS, NEW JERSEY! A VICTIM OF AN UNSANCTIONED VAMPIRE ATTACK WAS TAKEN TO PENNY'S HOSPITAL, WHERE SHE EXHIBITS ALARMING BODILY CHANGES AND A STRANGE HUNGER...

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SECAUCUS,
NEW JERSEY.

I WAS IN
'GHANISTAN
AND I NEVER
SAW WORSE
DEN DIS.

LIKE IT WAS
DONE BY SOME
WAR MACHINE
OR SOMETHING.
BIG GUNS, OR...
SOMETHING,
I DUNNO.

NOT
GUNS...

...THIS WAS
DONE BY AN
AIRPLANE.

HOW
DO YOU
KNOW?

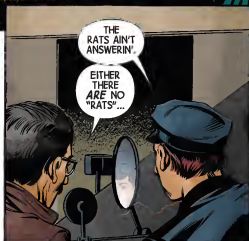
WHOLE
BUNCHA FOLKS
HEARD IT FLYIN'
OVER, DETECTIVE.
THEY SAID IT DIDN'T
SOUND LIKE A JET.
MORE LIKE ONE
O' THEM...

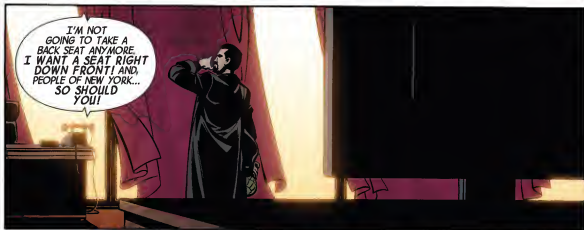
...OLD-
FASHIONED
PROPELLER
JOBS, YOU
KNOW?

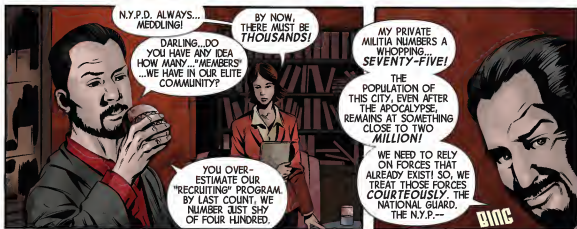
PROPELLERS.
HAMMM...

DIRIGIBLES...THAT FLY OVER
SPORTING EVENTS...USE
PROPELLERS TO MOVE THEM
THROUGH THE AIR. IF I AM NOT
MISTAKEN, THERE ARE STORAGE
HANGARS RIGHT HERE IN
NEW JERSEY.

NEWARK,
NEW JERSEY.









EVERY MAN WHO I MEET IS EITHER INNOCENT OR GUILTY...OF SOMETHING. IF HE IS INNOCENT, I DO NOT NEED TO SHAKE HIS HAND. IF HE IS GUILTY, I DO NOT WANT TO. THIS IS NOT TO SUGGEST, MISTER MAYOR, THAT YOU FALL INTO EITHER CATEGORY.



I UNDERSTAND, PERFECTLY. I'VE BEEN KNOWN TO EMPLOY...SIMILAR STANDARDS.

THIS WAS SUPPOSE TO BE PRIVATE.

THIS IS MINDY GREEN, MY CAMPAIGN MANAGER. THAT'S AS PRIVATE AS IT GETS IN ELECTION SEASON.

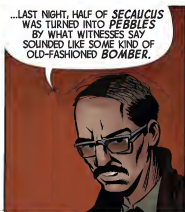
YOU MUST BE HERE FOR A REASON, GENTLEMEN. WHAT IS IT?



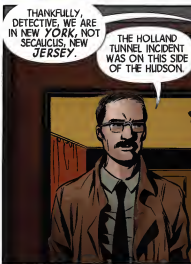
YES, THERE IS A REASON. WE ARE INVESTIGATING SOME VERY PECULIAR EVENTS. FIRST, TWO BORDER GUARDS WERE KILLED ON THE MANHATTAN SIDE OF THE HOLLAND TUNNEL.

YES, I WAS INFORMED ABOUT THAT.

NEXT, A TOLL-BOOTH WAS DESTROYED... DESTROYED! ERASED...ON THE JERSEY SIDE. AND NEXT...



...LAST NIGHT, HALF OF SECAUCUS WAS TURNED INTO PEBBLES BY WHAT WITNESSES SAY SOUNDED LIKE SOME KIND OF OLD-FASHIONED BOMBER.



THANKFULLY, DETECTIVE, WE ARE IN NEW YORK, NOT SECAUCUS, NEW JERSEY.

THE HOLLAND TUNNEL INCIDENT WAS ON THIS SIDE OF THE HUDSON.



WE'RE SPECULATIN'...JUST SPEC-ULATIN'...THAT SOME BAD GUY MIGHTA BROUGHT SOMETHIN' ACROSS THE RIVER. EXPLOSIVES? SOME KINDA GERM, MAYBE?



THAT'S A BIT OF A STRETCH DON'T YOU THINK?



WE ARE
INDEED...STRETCHING.
BASED ON A SUSPICION
WE HAVE...THAT ALL
THESE EVENTS ARE
CONNECTED.



MY PARTNER
MENTIONED...A
"GERM." THERE IS
ANOTHER CASE WE
ARE LOOKING
AT.

WHAT'S
THAT?



COLUMBIA HOSPITAL.
SOME DAME GETS BRUNG
IN OFF THE STREET. SLICED
INTA RIBBONS. CLOSE TA DYIN'.
THEY FIX HER UP. ALL THE
WAY. THEY FIX HER UP. SHE'S
ALL BETTER! EXCEPT SHE'S
NOT! SHE'S STILL
SICK!



NONE
OF THE DOCS
CAN FIGURE WHAT
KINDA DISEASE
SHE'S GOT.

I NEVER
THOUGHT OF IT
AS A "DISEASE."



YOU NEVER
THOUGHT OF...
WHAT...AS A
DISEASE,
MA'AM?

SHE MEANT...
WHAT SORT OF
DISEASE COULD IT
POSSIBLY BE?

THAT'S
WHAT WE ARE
WONDERING.



AND HOW
COULD ANY OF
THIS POSSIBLY BE
CONNECTED
TO ME?

ONLY IN
THE CURIOUS
MIND, SIR, WOULD
THERE BE ANY
CONNECTION AT
ALL. I SIMPLY
WANTED YOU TO
BE...FULLY
INFORMED.

SORRY
TO BOTHER
YOU. WE'LL
SHOW
OURSELVES
OUT.



YOU'LL NEED TO USE EXTRA CAUTION...WHEN YOU GO AFTER THE THREE PEOPLE WHO NEED TO BE PUNISHED.

THREE?

YOUR NEPHEW, BILL.

THAT'S ONE.

THE WOMAN WE JUST HEARD ABOUT. THE ONE IN THE HOSPITAL.

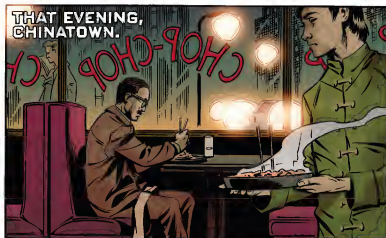
THAT'S TWO.

AND SMARTY-PANTS.

"SMARTY-PANTS"?

THIS DETECTIVE WHO HAS SUDDENLY COME SNIFFING AROUND.

AH, YES. THAT'S THREE. BUT, AS I SAID...WE MUST TREAT OUR CIVIL SERVANTS...WITH CIVILITY.











YOU, ER...
YOU MIGHT HAVE
SEEN ME ON
TELEVISION IN THESE
PAST WEEKS.

AS A
MATTER OF FACT...
I HAVE SEEN YOU.
FREQUENTLY.

I HOPE
YOU'RE NOT
TOO...DISTURBED
BY THE THINGS
I'VE BEEN
SAYING.



DISTURBED?
OF COURSE NOT.
I DON'T EXPECT
YOU TO SHARE
MY...POLITICAL
VIEWS.



THAT'S...
COMFORTING
TO HEAR.



THERE'S ONE
THING WE CAN
AGREE ON.

WHAT'S
THAT?



THIS TRULY
IS...A LOVELY
EVENING.



NO!
Y-YOU...
KILLED
ME?

YES, AND
I WILL SOON
HAVE THE PLEASURE...
OF KILLING YOU
AGAIN!



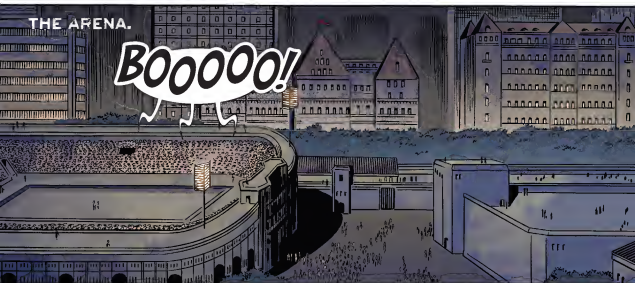


RINYON'S
APARTMENT.



THE ARENA.

Booooo!



IT'S LIKE...
THEY JUST
DON'T WANNA
FIGHT!



I DON'T GET IT.
THEY MIX IT UP REAL
GOOD IN THEIR TRAINING
SESSIONS. AND THE **BIG**
GUY, THERE, LITTLE JOHN.
HE'S THE ONE THAT
KNOCKED ZANZIBAR'S
HEAD OFF!

ZANZIBAR
WENT AFTER
THAT KID,
JO.



THE NEW
BUNCH, THE ONES
WE FOUND IN THE
SUBWAY. IT'S LIKE THEY
HAVE SOME KIND OF...
BROTHERHOOD, OR
SOMETHING. LIKE...THEY
DON'T WANT TO **HURT**
EACH OTHER.



BRING UP ONE
OF THE OLD PROS.
WHO DO WE HAVE
LEFT?

WELL...
THERE'S JOE
YOUNG.



PERFECT.
NO ONE
LIKES **HIM**.

LADIES AND
GENTS, BOYS AND
GIRLS...YOU REMEMBER
HIM FROM THE OLD
DAYS...MIGHTY JOE
YOUNNNNG!!!



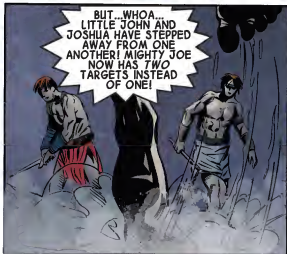
JOE IS
GOING RIGHT
TO WORK!



T-CHING



BUT...WHOA...
LITTLE JOHN AND
JOSHUA HAVE STEPPED
AWAY FROM ONE
ANOTHER! MIGHTY JOE
NOW HAS TWO
TARGETS INSTEAD
OF ONE!



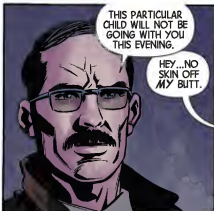
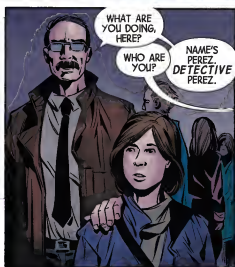
SWING AND
A MISS! MIGHTY
JOE HAS BEEN
THROWN OFF-
BALANCE!



AND HERE
COMES JOSHUA!
IT SEEMS IMPOSSIBLE,
BUT HE AND LITTLE
JOHN ARE WORKING
TOGETHER!







I
HOPE YOU
APPROVE.

CLICK

I BROUGHT
IN ALL THE BEST
CONSULTANTS.
SPARED NO
EXPENSE ON THE
EQUIPMENT.

I CAN
SEE THAT.

IT'S...
EVERYTHING
I COULD EVER
HAVE WANTED.
THANK YOU.





FOLIE

GEORGE A. ROMERO

EMPIRE OF THE DEAD

ACT TWO

ILLUSTRATED BY
DALIBORTALAJIC

MARVEL

4 of 5

**PARENTAL
ADVISORY!
NOT FOR KIDS!**



NYC UNDEAD UPDATE!



MAYOR CHANDRAKE



PENNY JONES



PAUL BARNUM



XAVIER

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BUT IT'S NOT ALL GOOD NEWS. MAYOR CHANDRAKE KILLED HIS NEPHEW FOR DARING TO RUN AGAINST HIM WHILE A MAN NAMED RUNYON PULLS STRINGS TO QUIETLY BACK DARK HORSE CANDIDATE (AND VAMPIRE) CHILLY DOBBS. A BAND OF SOUTHERN REBELS MOVE TO INVAD E NYC FROM NEW JERSEY! A VICTIM OF AN UNSANCTIONED VAMPIRE ATTACK WAS TAKEN TO PENNY'S HOSPITAL, BUT WHEN SHE BEGAN TO CHANGE SHE AND HER MOTHER WERE KILLED BY CHANDRAKE'S MEN.

NEW YORK REMAINS A DANGEROUS PLACE. BE PREPARED. STAY VIGILANT. AIM FOR THE BRAIN.

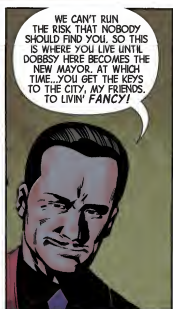
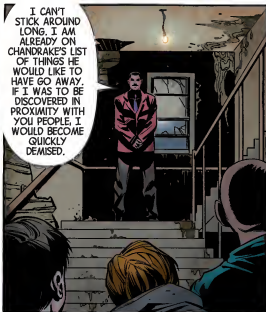
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MANHATTAN'S WEST SIDE.



I CAN'T
STICK AROUND
LONG. I AM
ALREADY ON
CHANDRAKE'S LIST
OF THINGS HE
WOULD LIKE TO
HAVE GO AWAY.
IF I WAS TO BE
DISCOVERED IN
PROXIMITY WITH
ANY PEOPLE, I
WOULD BECOME
QUICKLY
DEMISED.





I DON'T
WANT TO "LIVE
FANCY."

THEN THESE
DIGS OUGHTA
SUIT YOU JUST
FINE.

I WANT...
CHANGE! **REAL**
CHANGE! I WANT
THIS CITY TO BE RUN
WITH **RESPECT** FOR
THE LAW! NOT THE
CROOKED WAY
THAT CHANDRAKE
RUNS THINGS.



MISTER DOBBS...
I HAVE INVESTED VERY
LARGE AMOUNTS OF
LETTUCE ON THE BET THAT
YOU ARE A GUY WHO, ALL
YOU WANT IS FOR OTHER
GUYS TO PLAY YOU FAIR.
I AM WITH YOU. ALL
THE WAY.

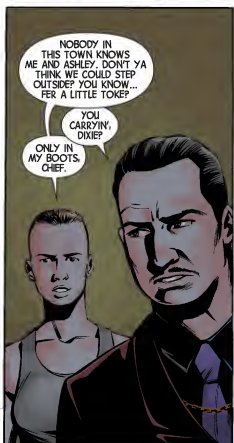
I APPRECIATE
YOUR CONFIDENCE IN
ME, IT'S JUST...WELL...
WHY ARE YOU SO
CONFIDENT?



SIMPLE.
THERE'S NO WAY YOU
CAN LOSE! EVERYBODY
KNOWS CHANDRAKE IS A
PHONY. EVERYONE KNOWS
HIS **NEPHEW** WAS A **PHONY**.
YOU, MY FRIEND, ARE
THE **REAL MCCOY!**



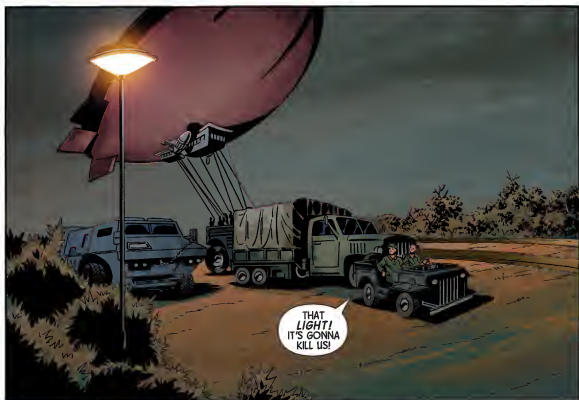
ASHLEY, I'M
NOT SO SURE ABOUT
THIS DOBBS FELLA.
HOPE WE HOOKED OUR
CABOOSE ONTO THE
RIGHT TRAIN.



NOBODY IN
THIS TOWN KNOWS
ME AND ASHLEY. DON'T YA
THINK WE COULD STEP
OUTSIDE? YOU KNOW...
FER A LITTLE TOKE?

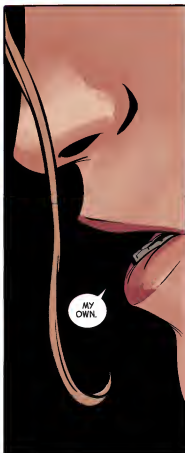
YOU
CARRYIN',
DIXIE?
ONLY IN
MY BOOTS,
CHIEF.



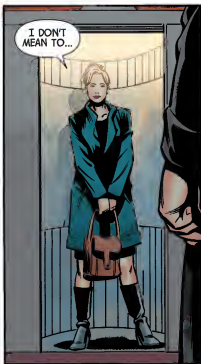












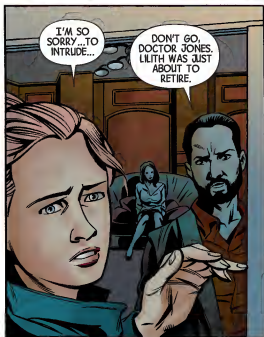
I DON'T
MEAN TO...



OH...I
THOUGHT
YOU'D BE
ALONE.

MY HUSBAND
IS NEVER ALONE.
HE'S ALWAYS GOT...
HIMSELF...TO KEEP
HIM COMPANY.

Y-YOUR...
HUSBAND?



I'M SO
SORRY...TO
INTRUDE...

DON'T GO,
DOCTOR JONES.
LILITH WAS JUST
ABOUT TO
RETIRE.

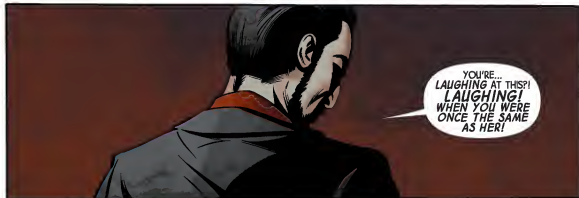


DOCTOR
JONES!



DING

HAHAHA!
POOR DOCTOR
JONES!



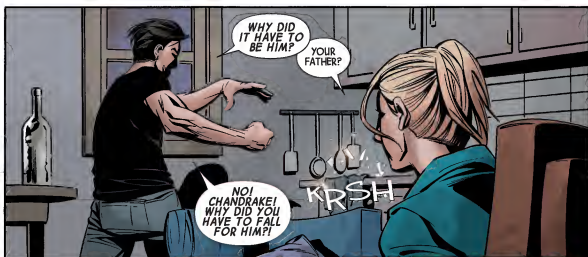
YOU'RE...
LAUGHING AT THIS?!
LAUGHING!
WHEN YOU WERE
ONCE THE SAME
AS HER!











WHY DID IT HAVE TO BE HIM?

YOUR FATHER?

NO! CHANDRAKE! WHY DID YOU HAVE TO FALL FOR HIM?!

KRSH



I'VE ASKED YOU BEFORE. DID HE DO ANYTHING TO YOU? PHYSICALLY?

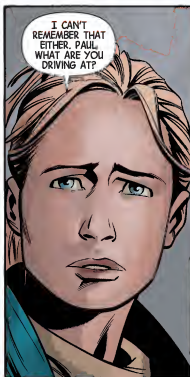


WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT? WHAT DOES IT MATTER? I CAN'T REMEMBER ANYTHING THAT MIGHT BE INTERPRETED AS...

YOU HAVE TO TRY...!



SORRY, OF COURSE YOU CAN'T REMEMBER. THAT'S WHAT...SOME MEN CAN...DO...TO SOME WOMEN. HOW MANY TIMES HAVE YOU BEEN TOGETHER? ALONE TOGETHER?



I CAN'T REMEMBER THAT EITHER. PAUL, WHAT ARE YOU DRIVING AT?



NOTHING. I'M LETTING MY IMAGINATION RUN AWAY WITH ITSELF. GUESS...GUESS I'M JUST...JEALOUS. SORRY.

**MAYOR CHANDRAKE'S
APARTMENT.**

THIS MAYOR
IS FEATHERING HIS
OWN NEST! HE WINS...
WE ALL LOSE!



HE'S GOTTA
BE SOMEWHERE
IN THE CITY.




WITH ALL OUR
TECHNOLOGY, WE
OUGHTA BE ABLE TO
TRACK HIM.



WE WILL FIND
HIM, SIR. IT'S JUST
A MATTER OF...HOW
LONG WILL IT
TAKE.





HOW LONG DO
YOU THINK IT WOULD
TAKE ME TO REPLACE
YOU, SOLDIER?



NOT VERY
LONG AT ALL,
SIR.

WELL, THAT'S
HOW LONG YOU
HAVE TO FIND
THIS GUY!



DOBBS CAN'T
DAMAGE YOU. I
MEAN...WHO IS HE?
SOME **SCHMUCK!**
WAY OFF THE
RADAR.

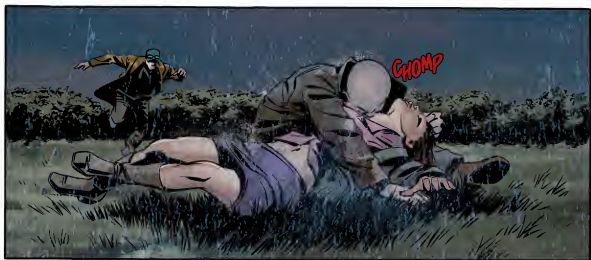


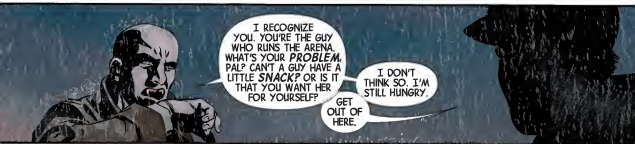
HE STAYS
OFF THE RADAR
LONG ENOUGH. ALL
OF A SUDDEN HE'S
ON THE RADAR!
THAT'S HOW IT IS
THESE DAYS.

TAPPAN ZEE BRIDGE.











FBI

MARVEL

5 of 5

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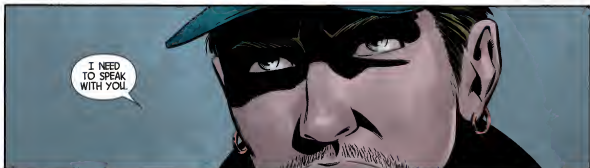
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BUT IT'S NOT ALL GOOD NEWS. A MAN NAMED RUNYON PULLS STRINGS TO QUIETLY BACK DARK HORSE MAYORAL CANDIDATE (AND VAMPIRE) CHILLY DOBBS TO CHALLENGE CHANDRAKE. A VAMPIRE VICTIM BROUGHT TO PENNY'S HOSPITAL BEGINS TO MAKE HER SUSPICIOUS AS CHANDRAKE MOVES UNCOMFORTABLY CLOSE. BARNUM THWARTS A VAMPIRE ATTACK AND DECIDES A LINE MUST BE DRAWN.

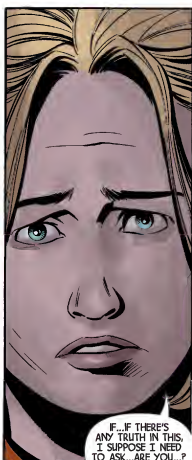
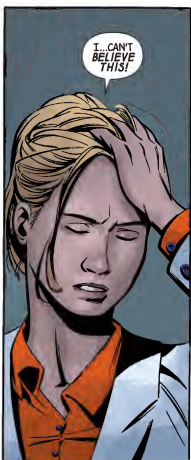
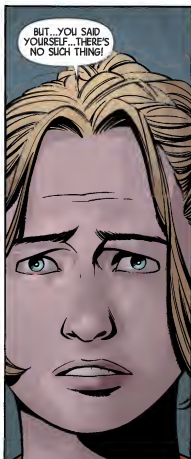
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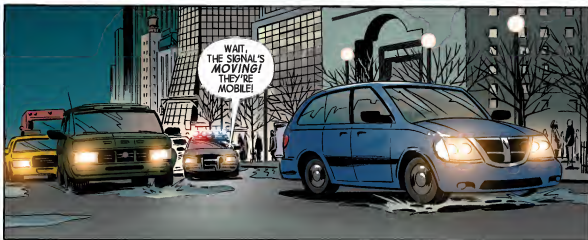
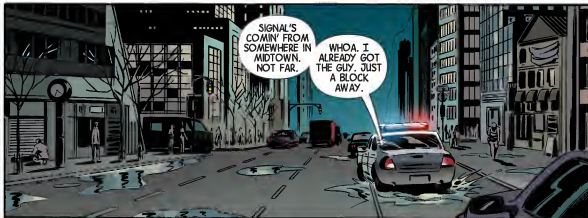
WHO ARE YOU? BOTH OF YOU? WHO AND...AND WHAT ARE YOU?!

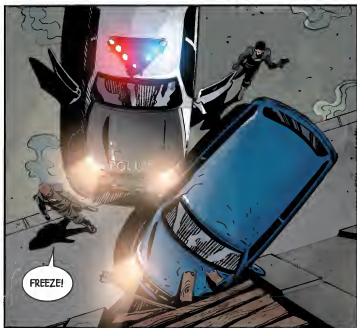
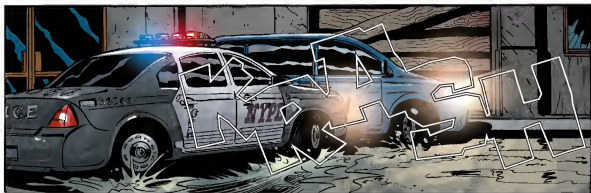
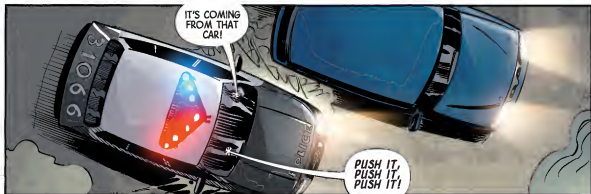


MAYOR CHANDFAKE'S
APARTMENT.













WHAT
CAN I DO,
EXCEPT...
THIS!



BARNUM'S APARTMENT.



GIMME
A SPLASH.
WILL YAP?



I MISS
YOU, PAUL. MISS
YOU BAD. GUESS
I PICKED THE
WRONG GUY.

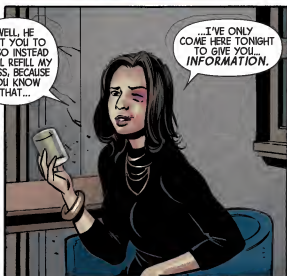


THE WAY
YOUR FACE
LOOKS, I'D SAY
YOU PICKED *WAY*
WRONG.



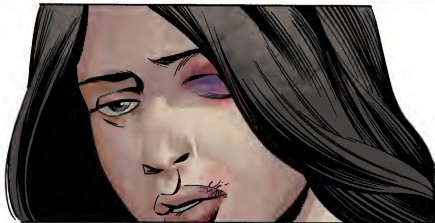
I HAVE
SOME THINGS
TO TELL YOU.
FIRST, I NEED
A DRINK.

THERE'S
ONE IN YOUR
HAND. JUST AS THERE
HAS *ALWAYS* BEEN
AS LONG AS I'VE
KNOWN YOU.





THE SORT
THAT WILL
DESTROY MY
HUSBAND.
WOULDN'T YOU
LIKE THAT?



I DON'T
KNOW IF I
WOULD OR NOT.
I'M LIVIN'
GOOD.

SUPPOSE I
WERE TO TELL YOU
ABOUT SOMETHING THAT
COULD BE OF CONCERN
TO EVERYONE IN THIS
CITY. POSSIBLY, IN
THE END...



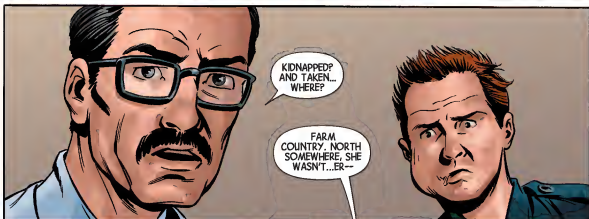
...TO
EVERYONE IN
THE WORLD...
WHAT EVER IS LEFT
OF IT. WHAT
WOULD YOU
SAY THEN?

POLICE HEADQUARTERS.
LATER.

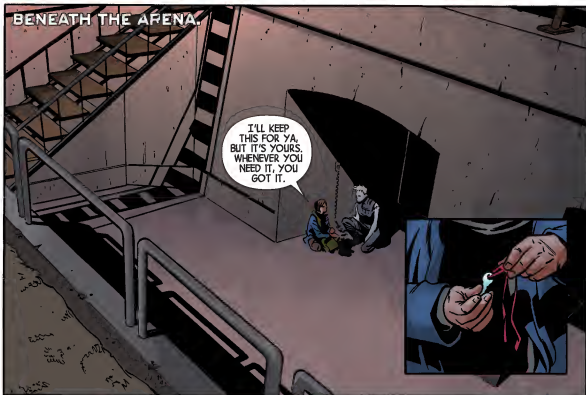
MMMM.
AINT HAD
NOTHIN' TO EAT
SINCE...I CAN'T
REMEMBER.

I WOULD
GLADLY GO HUNGRY
IF I COULD ONLY FIGURE
SOME OF THE HINKY
STUFF THAT'S GOIN'
ON IN THIS CITY.





BENEATH THE ARENA.



I THINK YOU UNDERSTAND ME. BUT THERE'S TIMES WHEN I'M NOT SURE.



I THINK YOU WANT ME TO KEEP THIS KEY. IF YOU DON'T... JUST STOP ME FROM PUTTING IT INTO MY BAG.



OKAY, THEN.



PENNY JONES' LAB.

YOU LOOK AS IF YOU'VE BEEN THROUGH A GARBAGE DISPOSAL.

ONE OF THE ONLY NEW PIECES OF EQUIPMENT MY PATRON FAILED TO PROVIDE.

WE HAVE LOTS TO TALK ABOUT, BUT I DON'T HAVE TIME RIGHT NOW. I JUST WANTED TO WARN YOU...

...SOMEONE HAS BEEN KIDNAPPING CHILDREN. RIGHT OFF THE STREET.

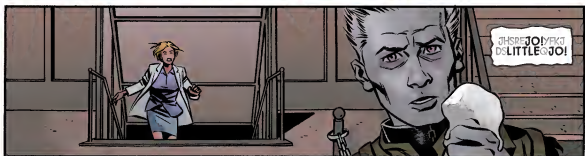
I TELL YOU THIS BECAUSE I'M WORRIED ABOUT...YOUR CHILD.

I DON'T HAVE A CHILD.

ANYWAY...I JUST CAME TO WARN YOU. LOOK OUT FOR YOUR KID.

SEEMS TO ME I'VE SEEN YOU AND YOUR STINKER FRIENDS HANGIN' OUT WITH A SMALL PERSON. 'BOUT FOUR FEET TALL. WHAT'S HER NAME? JOSEPHINA?

THE ARENA.





NEXT: ACT 3



